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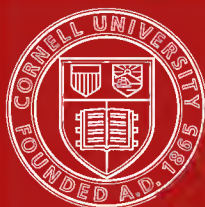
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Anna Van Schaack.

Aug. 1904.

The Days of Old.

A FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

✻ ON THE ✻

Reformed Protestant Dutch Church,

OF KINDERHOOK, N. Y.

PREACHED JUNE 5, 1904,

BY THE PASTOR,

REV. EDWARD A. COLLIER, D. D.



COURIER PRINTING HOUSE, CHATHAM, N. Y.
1904.

To My Beloved People:

In preparing this discourse for publication, as requested by many, it seemed desirable to add items that were omitted when the sermon was delivered, lest even the most patient ears should be unduly wearied. All available sources of information have been used. The Dutch records have been read to me by those versed in the language. Old papers and maps in Albany have been carefully scrutinized. The Documentary History of the State, Dr. Corwin's Manual of the Reformed Church and his recently published volumes of the Ecclesiastical Records of the State have been freely drawn upon, and the recollections of aged friends repeatedly taxed. It is hoped that this general acknowledgement of manifold indebtedness will suffice, without disfiguring the pages with references. I am indebted to Mr. Wait for much valuable assistance in the preparation of the illustrations. The addition of baptisms, marriages, consistories and communicants would make the history more satisfactory, but would involve the transcription of many thousands of names and the publication of a large volume. This brief sketch is published with the hope that it may be of interest and value to the many friends of this historic church, which is so very very dear to your affectionate Pastor,

EDWARD A. COLLIER.

Kinderhook, N. Y.,
June, 1904.



1



2



3

PASTORS
1801-1904
(two omitted)



4



5



6

PASTORS, 1801-1904.

[TWO YEARS EXCEPTED.]

1. JACOB SICKLES.
2. J. C. VANDERVOORT.
3. B. VAN ZANDT.

4. O. BRONSON.
5. J. R. BERRY.
6. E. A. COLLIER.

Remember the days of old,

Consider the years of many generations. — Deut. 32 : 7.



This is a strain from Moses' song, recounting the Lord's marvelous doings for His people now on the border of the promised land. It is a summons to remembrance and consideration of the past; a summons worthy of our attention as well as theirs. As furnishing occasion alike for thankfulness and humility, for encouragement and for admonition, such occasional remembrance may be helpful as well as interesting.

This is true as regards the community, the nation and the Christian Church as a whole, and also as regards any local church like this, whose history covers "the years of many generations." And when, as never before in the two hundred and sixty years since Kinderhook was settled, there occurs the fortieth anniversary of one pastorate, it seems fitting that we not only record our gratitude to the Head of the Church, but also give special heed to the counsel of the text.

Kinderhook means children's corner. It is a beautiful name, given, tradition alleges, by a Holland shipmaster sailing up the Hudson, because of the Indian children seen on a point jutting out into the river.

On the earliest maps the name is given to a tract of about four miles along the river and thence extending easterly about eight miles. It thus included the whole of Stuyvesant, and parts of Stockport, Ghent and Chatham, as well as the present township of Kinderhook.

Martin Van Buren is reported as having stated that the first settlers came to this region about the year 1640. The date 1623, embedded in the brick wall of one of our old houses, seems much too near Hendrick Hudson's voyage of discovery to be trustworthy. In 1656, however, a traveler from Holland wrote of Kinderhook as being "one of the principal settlements along the Hudson." The settlers, who were mostly Hollanders, with a few Swedes, built their houses in the first instance along the river front, and then along the banks of the Stockport, Kinderhook and Claverack creeks.

In due time their first houses, probably of logs and with thatched roofs, gave place to larger and better buildings of brick brought from Holland. Remnants of these are still standing; one at least in our village, and one on the Lindenwald road; and there are those living who remember others, or at least their ruins. Some of these buildings, with their massive walls and heavy oaken beams, were not only most substantial, but quite pretentious and even elegant for their time.

Kinderhook village was built on land originally bought of a Mohican Indian chief named Emikee. It grew, but, slowly. As late as 1714 the inhabitants, children and slaves included, numbered but three hundred and twenty-five. The earliest map of the

village shows scarcely more than a dozen houses; all these and the first church building being along or near the street now leading up from the two bridges over the creek.

The Hollanders brought hither that love of God and of His Word and Church, for which their fathers of "the Church under the Cross" had suffered so much. As early as 1660, undoubtedly, the beginnings of this church are to be placed. At that time and for fifty years thereafter the Albany pastors rendered occasional service here. In 1702, one Paulus Van Vleck was summoned to Albany to answer for irregular conduct in serving as Clerk or Precentor here without a license from His Excellency, Lord Cornbury; as also were the officials of the congregation. A certificate in Mr. Van Vleck's favor signed by four persons speaks of him as "Precentor and Schoolmaster of our church" and as "comporting himself to the great content of our congregation." The certificate also states that since forbidden to do so he had not preached "in house or barn or in any place in Kinderhook," but that he performed the duties of Precentor, as two others had done before him.

In the historical discourse on the Albany church, by the late Dr. E. P. Rogers, it is stated that the Kinderhook church was organized as an independent church in 1712 by the Albany pastor, the Rev. Dr. Petrus Van Driessen. In the order of organization, Kingston, New Paltz, Tappan, Tarrytown and Rochester, Ulster Co., are the only older Dutch churches between New York and Albany. Our earliest records are in the handwriting of this Petrus Van Driessen, and are dated, May 27, 1716. He

styles himself "Regular Minister at Albany; occasional, at Kinderhook." His register of members, "as found and recorded" by him, consisted of these twelve names: Leender Connyn, Aendries Prosie, Thenis Van Slyck, Thomas Wiler, Catrina Verrin, Elsie Valkenburgh, Ariaentie Mulder, Ariaentie Vanderpoel, Breggie Wieler, Eva Valkenburgh, Maria Wieler, Catrena Van Slyck. A second enrollment in 1721 added fifteen to this number. Among these fifteen, we find the familiar names, Van Dyck, Huyck, Dingman, Van Alstyne, Vandecar, Vosburgh, Van Alen and Gardenier.

From 1716 to the present time the records of members, marriages and baptisms are nearly complete, a few pages only being missing. Until nearly the end of the century they are wholly in Dutch. The number of infant baptisms in the early years was enormous. They occurred almost every Sabbath, and in many instances two or more were baptized on the same day. In the year 1776 there were 109 infant baptisms; and in the year 1782 there were 111, one of the infants being a future President of the United States. It is, however, to be borne in mind in this connection, as well as regards the large accessions hereafter noted, that there are now twelve or fifteen Protestant churches within the territory in which this church for many years stood alone.

Although organized in 1712, the church remained dependent upon the Albany pastor's ministrations for about fifteen more years. For a portion, however, of this interval, the Rev. John Jacob Oehl (Ehle) rendered occasional service here, as our records show.

Pastors of Our Church.

I. Johannes Van Driessen (1727-35) was a brother of the Albany pastor. Peter Van Driessen's interest in his brother evidently warped his judgment and somewhat dimmed, for a time, his perception of right and wrong. Johaunes had sought licensure and ordination in Holland, but had been denied because of sad failure in his examinations and the presentation of false credentials. Advised, it is stated, by the Hon. Robert Livingston, the King's secretary, Peter sent his brother, with a letter of recommendation from the Patroon Van Rensselaer, to the Faculty of Yale College. A Congregational Council was thereupon assembled at New Haven, which examined Mr. Van Driessen and gave him his credentials.

These New Haven credentials, in Latin, are spread in full upon our records, as they are, it is stated, on those of all other churches to which he ministered. In 1726, in view of the need of more frequent service, the consistory, in union with that of the Claverack church, and as advised by Petrus Van Driessen, extended a joint call to Johannes, which he accepted. Kinderhook agreed to pay forty pounds of his salary. In 1727 he came and was duly installed by his brother. Because of the irregularity of the ordination which had been refused by the Classis of Amsterdam, and for other reasons which need not be stated, the confidence of other ministers and churches was denied him, and both he and his brother were severely censured by the Classis.

Claverack, becoming dissatisfied, withdrew from the joint arrangement after one year. Kinderhook,

however, continued loyal to its chosen pastor. In 1732 the consistory sent a memorial to the Classis of Amsterdam concerning the supposed injustice done to their pastor. They recount the story of his coming; attest the great acceptability of his service to all the people, and deplore "the spirit of jealousy often excited by malignant envy, which in all these years has not been able to draw a single member of our Kinderhook church away from our beloved pastor. It would be well (they kindly add) if Claverack could say as much."

Mr. Van Driessen's pastorate lasted about eight years and was by no means fruitless although thus clouded. He was subsequently silenced as a minister. In 1729 Mr. Van Driessen recorded the names of 101 heads of families as belonging to this congregation. He also recorded, without date, that, in his presence, Mr. Gerrit Van Schaack presented to the church a silver cup which his father Laurens Van Schaack had bequeathed. The subsequent history of the cup is now unknown.

After Mr. Van Driessen's departure there was a discouraging vacancy for about twenty years. The church, however, was supplied now and then by such preachers as could be obtained. The record of baptisms proves that services were held with considerable regularity, and, every year except four, there were at least a few accessions to the membership.

In 1736 Arent Van Dyck was appointed "Voorleezer" (Reader) at a yearly salary of twelve pounds. He thus served for five years, and was succeeded by Anthony Quackenbush, who served for five additional years. Seven months in the year they were to read

twice each Sabbath, once during the remaining months, and also on all Feast and Fast Days. In 1752, Ferdinandus Frelinghuysen, a brother of the "much beloved and apostolic" Theodore Frelinghuysen, of Albany, was called to the pastorate. He was a graduate of the University of Utrecht and had been that year ordained by the Classis of Amsterdam. He accepted the call and was on his way hither from Holland when he and his brother Jacobus died of smallpox while at sea, in the spring of 1753. A memorial service, conducted by his brother Theodore, was held in the church here.

II. Johannes Casparus Fryenmoet (1756-77) became pastor of the united churches of Kinderhook, Claverack and Livingston Manor in 1756. He gave one-third of his time to each church. In 1770 Schodack was substituted for the two other churches. Under the former arrangement his salary was 120 pounds, of which Kinderhook paid 40. Under the latter, this church paid 90 pounds and Schodack forty. His remarkably neat penmanship and the uniform addition of his age, where he had occasion to write his name, are characteristic features of many pages of our records. Very popular as a preacher and earnest in his piety, he was held in high honor and affection wherever known. He died here after a faithful and fruitful ministry of twenty-one years, and was buried first near the church in which he preached, but subsequently beneath this building, the site of which was originally a burial ground.

III. Johannes Ritzema (1779-89) was pastor of the Collegiate Church in New York city. Soon after the outbreak of the Revolution he was compelled to

leave the city and came hither. He was 68 years of age at the time, but served the church as acting pastor for about ten years. His salary was 143 pounds together with a parsonage, land and firewood. He was buried near the house in which he died, but in Dr. Berry's time the Collegiate consistory removed his remains to our cemetery and erected the modest monument there to be seen. An old paper in the State library which announces his death speaks of him as "a scholarly, eloquent and earnest preacher, and a cultivated Christian gentleman, well entitled to the respect and affection in which he was held." At Mr. Ritzema's request, Judge Silvester drew up the Act of Incorporation of "the Minister, Elders and Deacons of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kinderhook." That is the legal title of the church to this day. The original certificate of incorporation, dated Dec. 25th, 1788, is still in our possession. At his suggestion also, and at about the same time, our church seal was made. It was the work of a certain Mr. Wells, probably of Albany, is made of silver and cost six dollars. The seal, reproduced on the title page, is an appropriate one for the Church of Children's Corner, and for the mother of many baptized children and of churches, which this has been. Its Latin inscription is—"Seal of the Church at Kinderhook."

IV. Isaac Labagh (1789-1801) came to this church as his first charge, and served with evident acceptance and fruitfulness. Hitherto the church services had been wholly in the Dutch language. In the latter part of Mr. Labagh's ministry a portion of them were in English, as were the church records

also. In 1792 chandeliers were placed in the front part of the church, in order that the English service held in the school-house might thenceforth be held in the church. The school-house referred to was the incipient academy, standing on the site now occupied by the Central hotel. That site and the whole tract from and including Mr. Farrar's residence to the Union Bank corner, belonged at one time to the church. In 1792 the constitutional question, asked of the elders before each communion, was first introduced. In 1793, the two corner lots on which the Union Bank now stands, were sold to Abram I. Van Vleck for 172 pounds, and a third lot to Philip A. Van Alstyne for 72 pounds. All these lots were to be subject to an annual rental of eight shillings forever. The academy paid an annual rental to the church of three dollars. In 1796, in response to a petition presented by Mr. Peter Van Schaack, a strip of land five feet in width was added to the school-house lot, making it 60x90 feet. In 1800, Mr. Labagh was the first "Scriba" (stated clerk) of the new Classis of Rensselaer, then set off from that of Albany. In Feb. 1801, having accepted a call from the churches of Stone Arabia and Canajoharie, he was dismissed.

V. Jacob Sickles (1801-35) was called hither from his pastorate of the united churches of Coxsackie and Coeymans, which had been preceded by a service of about three years as an assistant to the eminent Dirck Romeyn of Schenectady. He was to have a salary of 195 pounds, 80 loads of firewood and the use of parsonage and land. One-half of the services were to be in English. Dr. Sickles' field of labor was ex-

tensive. As before stated there are now twelve or more Protestant churches within the territory within which this church stood alone during twenty-five years of his pastorate. At least six of these churches drew their original membership wholly, or in part, from this church. Dr. Sickles had the joy, at intervals, of beholding large accessions to the church membership. The years 1821 and 1822 especially were times of remarkable spiritual awakening here, as they were elsewhere, nearly seven hundred persons being received on confession within that short time. Although we have but one living communicant representing his pastorate, Dr. Sickles is well remembered by many who know his worthiness of the gracious tribute to his memory in Dr Van Zandt's sermon at his funeral. During the last two or three years of his pastorate, Dr. Sickles had first an assistant and then a colleague. The assistant was the Rev. David Cushing. Through unhappy differences of opinion leading to the Classical trial of Mr. Cushing for heterodoxy, and through some unwisdom, no doubt, on both sides, the 2d Dutch Church of Kinderhook, organized at Valatie in 1833, and composed of fifty-two members of the parent church, became, in December 1834, the 1st Presbyterian church of Valatie. Dr. Sickles' colleague for about one year was the Rev. Enoch Van Aken. In 1835 Dr. Sickles' resignation as pastor was accepted. Honored and beloved by many, he continued his residence here until his sorely lamented death in 1845. His grave is in our cemetery and is marked by a monument erected by the consistory of the church he had served so long and so well.

VI. Enoch Van Aken, colleague of the former

pastor (1834-35) was ordained by the Classis of Rensselaer in '34. His acceptable service here ended with that of his venerable associate and he accepted a call to the Bloomingdale church, of which he continued to be pastor for nearly fifty years, until shortly before his death in 1885.

VII. Henry Heermance (1835-36) was pastor for less than one year, because of failing health. His time of service, however, was one of large and joyful reaping. He died and was buried here ten years later. A son, Edgar L., became a minister of our Reformed church; a grandson, Woolsey, is now the Director of the American School in Athens, Greece; and another grandson, Edgar, a Congregational minister in Minnesota.

VIII. John C. Vandervoort (1837-42) came hither from Paterson, N. J. He is spoken of as an earnest preacher and a wise and faithful pastor. His subsequent charges were at Mellenville, New Paltz and Ghent, where he died in 1851. His remains also rest in our cemetery.

IX. Benjamin Van Zandt (1842-52) had been pastor at Union Village for six years when he accepted the call to this church. He was an elegant writer, a strong preacher and a man of marked executive ability. His subsequent charges were at Nyack (where he also served for two years as Principal of the Rockland Institute), Canajoharie and Sprakers, and Leeds. The last seventeen years of his life were spent in retirement at Catskill, but he continued in service as a supply as opportunity offered. He died at the age of 86.

X. Oliver Bronson (1854-57). Swiftly developing disease shortened his pastorate to three years, and in 1860 ended on earth a life of rare beauty and promise. It is a matter of personal opinion merely, but judging him from his published sermons and from what I know of him through a brother, whose friend he was, I regard him as the most brilliant, intellectually, of all your pastors, and as second to none in spirituality and devotion.

XI. James Romeyn Berry, (1857-63). Of his pastorate little need be said, so well and so tenderly is it remembered, although now more than forty years removed. Many living friends will be glad to read these extracts from the just and beautiful tribute of Dr. John McC. Holmes at his funeral: "As a man and a minister he was characterized by exceptional excellence. Of commanding personal presence, he attracted the attention of all who met him. But his qualities of mind and heart were even more conspicuous, and challenged the confidence and regard of those who knew him well. * * * As a preacher, he was a clear thinker, a forceful writer and an effective speaker. He carefully studied his sermons, and felt that the best he could produce should be given to God and the church. At the same time, his discourses were invariably practical and spiritual. * * * As a pastor, as well as a preacher, Dr. Berry was eminently successful. His nature was sympathetic and his devotion to his people intense. * * * He was enabled to lead many from darkness to light, and from death to life. * * * Only two days before his death he retired from the Presidency of the General Synod and preached a sermon on the occasion,

which was characterized by marked earnestness and spirituality. At the close of the discourse he quoted that last stanza of Ray Palmer's hymn, which the author repeated with his last breath:

*When death these mortal eyes shall seal,
And still this throbbing heart,
The rending veil shall Thee reveal,
All glorious as Thou art.*

The act was suggestive. In less than forty-eight hours he had passed through the veil and experienced the ineffable vision of Christ in His glory. It was a fitting close of a faithful ministry." Before coming here Dr. Berry had served for about seven years at Piermont and Syracuse. After leaving Kinderhook he was pastor in Jersey City, Fishkill-on-Hudson, Montclair and Rhinebeck. He died June 5, 1891.

XII. Your present pastor preached in this pulpit for the first time April 10th, 1864, and was installed pastor May 24th. Of the ministers who officiated at the installation not one is living. Of the consistory who signed the call but two are living, and but one remaining with us. Then a deacon, he is now, as regards service, our honored senior Elder, and also, as for forty-one years past, the faithful and efficient treasurer of the church, Mr. Wm. H. Rainey. "Instead of the fathers shall be the children." A son of one who signed your pastor's call is now an elder, and we welcome among our deacons one whose father and grandfather have filled the same important office; the last named uniting with the church by confession in '67, in the prime of his manhood.

Of the 307 communicant members of the church in 1864, only twenty-three are now enrolled. There is one representative of Dr. Sickles' pastorate now in her 98th year; there are two of Mr. Heermance's; three of Mr. Vandervoort's; two of Dr. Van Zandt's; one of an interval when the pulpit was vacant; three of Mr. Bronson's and eleven of Dr. Berry's.

Church Buildings.

There have been four church edifices; one more than was known in later years, when the tablet which is in the vestibule was made. This fact has been ascertained through personal search of our old records, aided by an accomplished Dutch scholar. Its truth is confirmed by the examination of old maps. In 1716 there is a resolution of Consistory to proceed to the obtaining of subscriptions for the building of a new church, "since our church has become very old and too small; our congregation having increased to a great multitude, so that our house can no longer contain them." The building spoken of as "very old" in 1716 was evidently the first. It stood nearly opposite the present Methodist church. What is supposed to be a representation of this (or of the 2d church) is on an old sampler embroidered by Miss Catharine Van Vleck, and now in the possession of Mrs. John K. Peirce. This has been photographed and, with some of its outlines straightened and the perspective improved, is reproduced in the accompanying cut for what it is worth. I call it the first church for reasons which seem good, if not conclusive, but I may be in error.



FIRST (OR SECOND) CHURCH.

The second larger building was erected after 1717, and stood on land now belonging to Mrs. Earll and near her residence. On a map of Kinderhook, made somewhat later, both churches are represented as standing where stated. From traditional accounts of this building it seems to have been patterned somewhat after one of the early Albany churches, with a four-sided roof and a small bell-tower, the rope from which came down in the aisle. The significance of the records is not altogether clear and desirable dates are missing. At an early date there was a sale or rental of twenty-six pews on the ground floor and twelve more in the two galleries, each holding six persons. Then, in 1769 there are records concerning pews "in the new gallery," and in 1791 "the second new gallery" is referred to. In the end, apparently, there were four galleries running around the four walls. The seating capacity of the pews spoken of was 300. Our oldest living communicant remembers the bell-rope in the aisle, but does not recall the arrangement of the galleries nor the exact shape of the building. In 1775 the Consistory resolved that, "as ordered from the beginning, the pew on the left of the pulpit is reserved for the Consistory, and that on the right for magistrates, colonels and captains." In 1801 some addition was made to this building, the character of which is unknown. The only heat in winter was from the foot-stoves brought to the church, the coals of which were wont to be replenished at Mr. Van Vleck's home opposite, and also at the inn, now the residence of Mr. Frank Risedorph. This church, misnamed the 1st on the vestibule tablet, was used for eighty years or more, in-

cluding a part of Dr. Sickles' pastorate.

Late in the year 1813, work on the foundation of the third building, on the present site, was begun. Through 1814 the massive walls slowly rose, and the church was completed and dedicated toward the end of 1815. The cash-book of the treasurer, Henry Van Vleck, indicates that the cost was ten or twelve thousand dollars, \$497 of which was for the bell. The fathers were zealous for the sanctity of the House of the Lord. That the older church might never be put to any unhallowed uses, it was discreetly demolished at a cost of about \$32.00, nearly eighteen months before the new church was ready for use. In the interim, a large barn belonging to Capt. John I. Pruyn was used for church services. The barn was that destroyed by fire about three years ago, and owned at the time by the late Mr. Edward Van Buren. The church, as originally erected, was one-third smaller than it was when burned in '67. It had a high pulpit, a lofty arched ceiling, and as many windows and pillars as there were at the time of the fire. There was a stove in each corner; and, that the galleries might be thoroughly warmed, it was thought necessary to place a fifth stove on a high platform in the center of the middle aisle. During the singing of the second hymn, the sexton would come in with a ladder and an armful of wood, and, mounting to the stove, would replenish the fire. The site of this building, like that of the 2d church, was a burial plot, and was given to the Consistory by its original owners. The fire revealed many of the old tombstones, as some well recollect. In 1835 the pulpit was modernized, the breast-work of the galleries lowered and the



THIRD CHURCH.

whole interior and exterior renovated at a cost of \$600.

During Dr. Van Zandt's pastorate, the church building was enlarged by the addition at the pulpit end of about one-third its former length. The basement also was then built. Unhappily, this was not accomplished without dissension. A protest against the proposed enlargement, signed by nineteen members of the congregation, is among our papers. The disregard of this protest by the Consistory led to the organization of the Episcopal church of this village.

This building remained substantially unaltered until the fire, although now and then renovated and re-adorned. The foundations and portions of the walls are the same now as then. How well and pleasantly many of us remember its unpretentious square belfry, its double rows of windows, its massive square galleries running the whole length of the church and supported by heavy pillars, and the large box pews on either side—that on the right of the pulpit and against the wall being that often occupied by President Van Buren. It was substantial and plain, but yet, for its day, an elegant structure. For a few of us some of the most hallowed and precious of life's memories still cluster about the former house, including as well the small, gloomy, damp basement, which yet was often irradiated by the shining presence of the Lord; notably in '57 and again in the opening months of '67.

Saturday the 14th of December 1867 was bitterly cold. At eleven o'clock some of us were attending the funeral of Mr. Silas Metcalfe, whose remains were brought hither for burial. In former

years he had been an active and useful member and officer of the church, as well as one of the most notable principals of the then noted academy. Scarcely had we returned from the burial and finished the noon-time meal, when an alarm of fire was sounded. Before sundown nothing remained of our holy and beautiful house save the walls and heaps of smouldering ruins. The pulpit-bible, sofa, and mahogany chairs now in the chapel, the old communion table, and a few cushions, books and a strip or two of carpet were the sole remains of the church furniture. That women wept, I need not say; that some strong men were bowed in tears is no wonder. Sunday was a day of silence and of private prayer. Your pastor, in whose wakeful ears again and again through the night the sweet-toned bell seemed to toll, had not self-control enough to hold even a prayer meeting.

On Monday Consistory met and resolved to arise and build. On Wednesday a largely attended meeting of the congregation, in Bray and Herrick's hall, heartily approved the resolution. Then came the magnificent response of the people in the way of subscriptions; then, in the Spring, the ringing sound of all tools of iron in the building of this temple, even sweeter music to our ears than ever was the song of returning birds; then, on the 4th of July, the great fair, in what is now Mr. Brown's carriage shop, yielding the energetic women-workers \$1700 in one day; then, in January '69, the glad entrance upon the use of our beautiful chapel for services, which for a year had been held in the old dilapidated Baptist church, which had been made as decent and comfortable as could be; and finally, on the 19th of May, the thronged all-



PULPIT AND FONT, CHILDREN'S DAY, 1889.

day jubilee of dedication—all this is a familiar story to many. The cost of this fourth building, including the organ and all appointments and furnishings was about \$42,000. Materials were then abnormally high and the total cost was considerably greater than it would be now. The first contribution for the rebuilding of the church was brought, before the day of the fire ended, by a boy seven years old, who asked permission of his mother to give the entire contents of his savings-bank.

When the church was dedicated we had a debt of \$10,000, which we thought we could not pay at once. The tornado of July 14, 1870, prostrating the spire, much higher and more graceful than the present one, breaking large holes in the main building and almost wrecking the chapel, proved that we could. For we at once raised not only the \$6,000 needed for repairs, but the \$10,000 additional debt. Never since then has any debt been allowed to accumulate beyond the fiscal year. To the wise insistence of our treasurer this creditable record is largely due; which yet would have been impossible without your equally creditable and generous responsiveness.

In October '87, the Baptismal Font, a costly and rarely beautiful memorial of Mrs. Mary Clark, long a devoted member of the church, was placed here by her daughter, the late Mrs. Peter Bain, long abounding in good works and generous deeds.

In the spring of '88, the children of another of our sainted women, Mrs. Margaret A. Reynolds, presented the communion table in memory of their mother. Still later, from the sons of the late Mr. and Mrs. Peter S. Hoes came these beautiful com-

munion chairs as memorials of their parents.

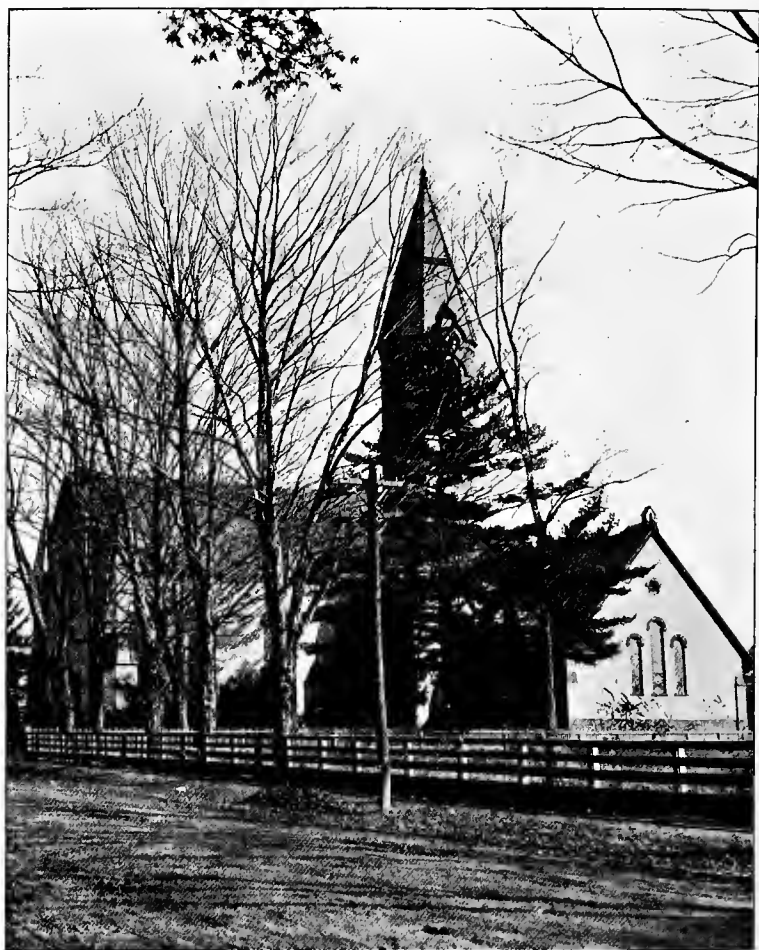
The pulpit Bible was presented by Mrs. Anna Harder Gibson, and the offering plates by Mrs. James Mix. The pulpit flower vases and light standards were memorial gifts of loving daughters of departed mothers of precious memory.

In 1901, and principally through the energetic effort of two members of the choir and one other helper, the addition was made to the chapel, which has already been useful on many occasions, and never more pleasantly so than on the evening of the 24th of May last.

The first legacy to the church was of \$500, left by Miss Lydia A. Van Alen, who died in 1876. Subsequently Miss Jane Van Alstyne, whose name is now the first of our living communicants, in addition to regular and considerable gifts to the missionary and educational work of our Reformed church, was the executor of her own will to the generous amount of \$2500. Still more recently there was the legacy of the late Mrs. Peter Bain of \$2,000. These latter sums are still intact and invested.

In view of the inevitably changing conditions in a community such as ours, changes the end of which we know not yet, it surely would have been a wise and gracious thing if some of the men as well as women of wealth, had remembered this church of their fathers for many generations, at least in their wills, that its proper and vigorous maintenance might be assured to perpetuity.

It should be added that for several years the late Mr. P. V. B. Hoes gave \$50 annually for a Pastor's library, the property of the Consistory. Including some



PRESENT CHURCH, FIRST VIEW.

unbound reviews, the volumes now number three hundred and sixty; largely of standard works certain to be valuable to any pastor, and nearly all the gift of Mr. Hoes.

Sunday School and Young People's Societies.

The beginning of our Sabbath School is involved in obscurity. At an early date, rudimentary schools were held in school houses, private dwellings and even barns. In 1834 there is a record that the school was removed from the main floor of the church to the galleries. In 1835 the Consistory deeded to the district a site for a school house in the rear of the church. Among the conditions of the deed were—that the building might at all times be used by the church when not needed for school purposes, and that the land should revert to the church when no longer used by the school. The building in its earlier and better days was used by the church for its prayer meetings and Sunday school, which after a few years more returned to the church. Our Sunday school has for many years maintained a native catechist or preacher in India. The first was Peter Souri, who attained high distinction and usefulness in the native church. The present representative is pastor Abraham Williams—not the first and most eminent of that name, but a valuable helper of good repute. The contributions of the school, considering its size, have been notably large, and wholly for benevolent purposes, never for itself.

Our C. E. society was organized in 1887 and is the oldest in the county. Its predecessor was a

Young People's Union which combined literary as well as social and religious features. It served an excellent purpose for several years until merged into the C. E. society. The Junior society has been admirably conducted, and our several mission societies and bands have been valuable workers in the one great field "which is the world."

The Parsonages.

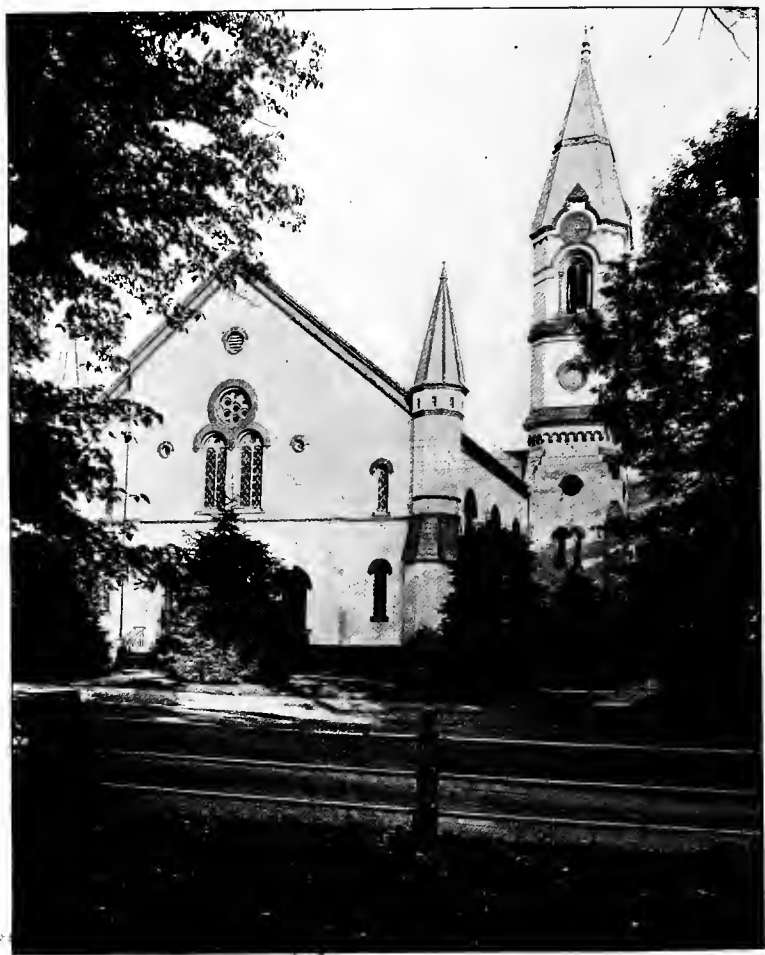
There are reasons for thinking that the present Scully house was the first parsonage, or at least that Mr. Ritzema lived and died there. It has been so stated. I am more and more disposed to question it, however, and to believe that he and his successors including Dr. Sickles, until 1835, lived in the house now occupied by Mr. A. H. Farrar. It was certainly the parsonage for many years, and originally had considerable land attached.

The site for the second parsonage was bought of Capt. John I. Pruyn in 1836, and the building soon thereafter erected at a cost of about \$2000. Mr. Vandervoort was its first occupant. It was originally without the extension at the rear, which has been added in two distinct portions at different times.

Statistics.

Of the statistics for the forty years of the present pastorate a few may be of interest.

Of the 706 ministers of our Reformed Church at the present time, only one, Dr. Wells of Flatbush, has had a longer pastorate. Of the twelve ministers in our Classis forty years ago, your pastor is the only



PRESENT CHURCH, SECOND VIEW.

survivor. Since he signed the Classical Formula, sixty-one ministers have joined the Classis and fifty-seven have left it. Most of the other churches of Classis have had from five to ten or more different men during these years. As nearly as can be ascertained, the whole number of communicants received since the beginning of our records in 1716 is 2446. This, it will be observed, is an average annual addition of slightly less than thirteen. The total of accessions in the last forty years is 544; and this, strange to say, is an annual addition of slightly more than thirteen. Only 195 couples have been married, and 308 infants and adults baptized; while the funerals (some of them burials only) have numbered 704.

Our benevolent contributions during these forty years have amounted to \$67,914, and the sums raised for congregational purposes up to the 24th of May have aggregated \$159,262, making a total of \$227,176. Undoubtedly our benevolent offerings have never been what they might and ought to have been. Moreover, the loss of many large givers, the diminished ability of others and certain other causes have tended to lessen the total of our offerings in recent years. And yet, as churches and people go, I am not ashamed of the record of the dear old church of Kinderhook. Its supreme gift to missions was the gift of Dr. Cornelius V. A. Van Dyck, of world-wide renown, who, when a lad of thirteen, here confessed his Savior, and whose name remained upon our register until his death. Other sons given to the ministry were Lawrence H. Van Dyck, John C. F. Hoes, John M. Van Buren, John B. Church and E. S. DeG. Tompkins. And then from the church, and in greatly in-

creased volume during the last fifty years, have gone the offerings which have given the church a place of honor.

The years have been freighted with much joy and much sorrow. Joy, because of the unbroken spirit of unity and affection, and that in times often provocative of discord; joy, because of occasional and most precious seasons of special blessing from on high; and joy for every soul led to become a follower of Christ, and for every child of God who may have been helped in the Christian life, and comforted and strengthened in the days of tribulation, trial and tears.

But the forty years have been freighted with much sorrow also. Sorrow that results have not been greater and better than they have been; sorrow for many failures, omissions and errors, known to me better than to any of you; sorrow for the appalling loss, as it seems from our earthly standpoint, of so many trusted and beloved friends and helpers, the meeting with whom again, it seems to me, will be one of the great joys of heaven. The changes in the homes, alike in the village and in the country, and the blotting out by death or removal of family after family who were the staunch friends and supporters of the church forty years ago, have been a sad experience indeed. Some have come in for whose devotion and service we are sincerely thankful, but not in sufficient numbers to make good the loss, either in numbers or in the changed character of the population, so painfully apparent to those whose memory covers these forty years.

I hope I am not transgressing the strictest limits

of propriety in saying—that I have tried to give you the word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their simplicity and purity. I have endeavored to be a faithful pastor, especially in your many, many times of sickness and sorrow. “I have coveted no man’s silver or gold.” I have urged upon you to “remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Would that my ministry hitherto had not been seemingly so in vain as regards those of you who will not come to Christ that ye might have life. Would that you would even now choose the better part which never shall be taken away. For your own sake, for your children’s sake, for your friends’ and companions’ sake, would that I might greet all without exception, as I do sincerely greet so many of you—

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye before our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and our joy. Therefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved.”

May God bless to us our “remembrance of the days of old and consideration of the years of many generations,” and to Him shall be the praise. AMEN.

Present Organization :

Pastor :

EDWARD A. COLLIER.

Consistory :

ELDERS.

W. H. RAINEY,
J. HAGADORN,
J. S. HOSFORD,
E. MILHAM.
TREASURER—W. H. RAINEY.

DEACONS.

F. BION VAN ALSTYNE,
C. M. BRAY,
T. M. KITTELL,
J. E. VAN ALSTYNE.
CLERK—C. M. BRAY.

Choir :

CHOIR MASTER—E. RISEDORPH. ORGANIST—MRS. W. V. S. BEEKMAN. QUARTETTE—MRS. WM. WAIT, MISS MARY LAWLER, MR. RISEDORPH, MR. MARTIN, AND CHORUS.

Sunday School :

SUPERINTENDENT—EDWARD VAN ALSTYNE.
ASSISTANT—J. S. HOSFORD.
SECRETARY—MISS LAURA A. HOSFORD.
LIBRARIAN—C. M. BRAY.

Ladies' Missionary Society :

PRES'T—MRS. N. D. GARNSEY. SEC'Y—MISS MARIA PRUYN.

Girls' Mission Band :

PRES'T—MRS. N. D. GARNSEY. SEC'Y—MISS H. W. COLLIER.

C. E. Society :

PRES'T—MISS SARAH V. S. BEEKMAN. VICE PRES'T—MISS M. KASTEN. REC. SEC.—MISS E. HERRICK. COR. SEC.—MISS C. BEST. PIANISTS—MRS. GEO. REYNOLDS, MISS FLORENCE L. PRUYN.

Junior C. E. Society :

SUP'T—MISS ANNA H. WILCOXSON.

Sexton :

ANDREW HAGADORN.

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